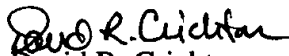


Remarks

Upon entry of the instant Preliminary Amendment, claims 1-20 are pending. Multiple dependencies have been eliminated. New claim 20 is derived from claim 19. The amendments are a matter of form and are made without prejudice to claims directed thereto in this or a subsequent application. No new matter has been added.

In view of the foregoing amendments, Applicants aver that the instant claims are now in better condition for examination on the merits. Early favorable action is respectfully solicited. Applicants request that the Examiner contact the undersigned representative if minor amendments will further prosecution.

Respectfully submitted


David R. Crichton
Attorney for Applicants
Reg. No. 37,300

Ciba Specialty Chemicals Corporation
540 White Plains Road
P.O. Box 2005
Tarrytown, New York 10591-9005
Tel: 914-785-7124
Fax: 914-785-7102
DRC/

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Amended Claims with Revisions

3. (amended) A process according to claim 1 ~~or claim 2~~ in which the polymer in step (c) is subjected to ultraviolet light radiation at an intensity of up to 500 milliWatts.

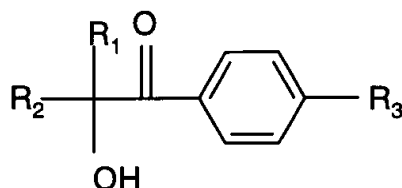
4. (amended) A process according to ~~any of claims 1 to 3~~ claim 1 in which the polymer is formed from acrylamide.

5. (amended) A process according to ~~any of claims 1 to 4~~ claim 1 in which the polymer has an intrinsic viscosity of at least 4 dl/g.

6. (amended) A process according to ~~any of claims 1 to 5~~ claim 1 in which the polymer formed by solution polymerisation.

7. (amended) A process according to ~~any of claims 1 to 6~~ claim 1 in which the ultra violet initiator is soluble or dispersible in the aqueous monomer or monomer blend.

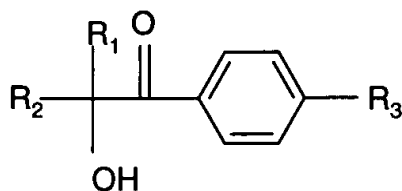
8. (amended) A process according to ~~any of claims 1 to 7~~ claim 1 in which the ultra violet initiator is a compound of formula:



wherein R₁ and R₂ are each independently C₁₋₃ alkyl or together form a C₄₋₈ cycloaliphatic ring, R₃ is H, C₁₋₂ alkyl or -O(CH₂CH₂)_nOH and n is 1-20.

11. (amended) A process according to ~~any of claims 1 to 10~~ claim 1 in which step (c) is conducted simultaneous with a drying stage.

14. (amended) A method according to claim 12 ~~or claim 13~~ in which the ultra violet initiator is a compound of formula:



wherein R_1 and R_2 are each independently C_{1-3} alkyl or together form a C_{4-8} cycloaliphatic ring, R_3 is H, C_{1-2} alkyl or $-O(CH_2CH_2)_nOH$ and n is 1-20.

19. (amended) A water soluble or water swellable polymer ~~obtainable~~ obtained by a process defined by ~~any of claims 1 to 11, 17 or 18~~ claim 1 or by a method according to anyone of claims 12 to 16 in which the amount of residual monomer is below 100 ppm.

20. (new) A water soluble or water swellable polymer obtained by a method according to claim 12 in which the amount of residual monomer is below 100 ppm.

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